



**Montana  
Office of Public Instruction**  
Denise Juneau, State Superintendent

**opi.mt.gov**

**Office of Public Instruction**  
P.O. Box 202501  
Helena, MT, 59620-2501  
(406) 444-3095  
(888) 231-9393  
(406) 444-0169 (TTY)  
**opi.mt.gov**

TO: Superintendents in Systems with High Schools  
High School Principals  
FROM: Judy Snow, State Assessment Director  
[jsnow@mt.gov](mailto:jsnow@mt.gov) 406-444-3656  
RE: ACT Plus Writing Assessment for Montana Juniors  
DATE: August 2012

On Tuesday, April 23, 2013, all Montana juniors will have the opportunity to take the ACT Plus Writing on a school day in their high schools. The test will be provided for these students without cost. This is because the Montana GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) Program received a \$28 million grant.

Included in that grant was an implementation pilot of the ACT Plus Writing to determine the feasibility of all juniors taking the test in their high schools. That pilot was administered in a sample of Montana high schools in the spring of 2012. The implementation pilot provided valuable information to assist the move forward to the full implementation. The schools were well-prepared and provided important feedback. Now the administration will be conducted in all Montana high schools by high school staff for all students on Tuesday, April 23, 2013 without cost to the schools or the students.

The Office of Public Instruction (OPI) will manage the contract with ACT, Inc. and will oversee the administration of the ACT Plus Writing. Educational grants through OPI will be available to schools for expenses directly related to administration arrangements.

Students have three options when taking the ACT Plus Writing:

1. Without accommodations
2. With ACT-Approved accommodations
  - Students will receive scores that are reportable to colleges, universities, and scholarship organizations and are accepted by the NCAA.
  - These accommodations are for students with professionally diagnosed and documented disabilities who receive accommodations in school.
  - Applications and documentation are required for ACT-Approved Accommodations. The window to request these accommodations is October 1, 2012 through January 25, 2013.
3. With State-Allowed accommodations
  - Some students may require accommodations that are not ACT-Approved but are allowed by OPI. Those students' scores will be reported to the students but are not reportable to colleges, universities, scholarship organizations, or the NCAA; however, the information the students receive from their results will be valuable in their planning for college or a career.
  - These accommodations follow the recommendations for accommodations for the ACT-Approved accommodations, but are available for students who do not have a disability but regularly receive accommodations in school.
  - State-Allowed Accommodations can be ordered directly online between October 1, 2012 and April 3, 2013.

**Please plan ahead!**

*The Montana Office of Public Instruction provides vision, advocacy, support, and leadership for schools and communities to ensure that all students meet today's challenges and tomorrow's opportunities.*

Information, including more information and training webinars, will be available after September 1, 2012. The OPI ACT website is: [http://www.opi.mt.gov/curriculum/MontCAS/#p7GPc1\\_11](http://www.opi.mt.gov/curriculum/MontCAS/#p7GPc1_11)

For your convenience, the enclosed sample letter can be used to inform your students and their families about this important news. It is recommended that all students and families in grades 9-11 receive this information. A Word copy to which you can add your letterhead or other information is located online <http://www.opi.mt.gov/pdf/Assessment/ACT/12ACTPlusWritingLtrStudentsParents.doc>

In the letter is the following link to free ACT test preparation resources.  
<http://www.opi.mt.gov/PDF/Assessment/ACT/12ACT-Free-resources-with-cover-sheet.pdf>

We look forward to working with you. Please contact the assessment office with questions.  
Thank you

Below are tentative dates. Please mark your calendars.

Date	Event
TBA	Online training sessions
January 9, 2013, 1-4:30 pm	Training session at OPI Statewide Assessment Conference, Billings
The week of April 15, 2013	Secure test materials arrive at schools. Testing personnel must be available to receive, inventory, and secure the materials. Schools on break during this week will receive their shipment the prior week.
April 23, 2013	School test date
April 23 – May 7, 2013	Accommodations testing window -- School may choose a date to administer the test to students requiring accommodations.
May 7, 2013	Makeup date for students who missed the April 24 date. This date is also the final day to test students who require accommodations

School letterhead and date

Dear Student and Family,

The Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI) has exciting news. On Tuesday, April 23, 2013, all Montana juniors will have the opportunity to take the ACT Plus Writing in their high schools. All colleges and universities in the United States as well as the NCAA accept ACT scores as part of the admissions process.

Usually students have to travel to a testing site for a Saturday administration and pay for the assessment. Because of funding through a federal grant, every junior will have the opportunity to take the ACT Plus Writing on a school day, in their high school, and at no cost to the student or the student's family. Students will be given the opportunity to select up to four colleges or scholarship agencies to receive their scores following testing.

Free ACT test preparation resources are online at the following site:

<http://www.opi.mt.gov/PDF/Assessment/ACT/12ACT-Free-resources-with-cover-sheet.pdf>

Please don't hesitate to call or email [SCHOOL] if you have any questions about this terrific opportunity for our high school juniors.

Sincerely,

Principal [NAME]